

What Is Claimed Is:

1. An automated method of dynamically selecting a level of compression to be applied to data to be transmitted, the method comprising:
 - 5 receiving a data request at a server configured to serve data;
 - identifying a bandwidth associated with a communication link coupling the server to a requestor that originate the data request;
 - determining an amount of data requested in the data request;
 - determining how busy the server is;
- 10 dynamically selecting a level of compression based at least on the bandwidth; and
- compressing the requested data using the selected level of compression.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - 15 determining whether the requested data are cacheable.
 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said identifying comprises transferring a known quantity of data between the server and the requestor.
 - 20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein said identifying comprises retrieving the bandwidth from a database.
 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said dynamically selecting comprises identifying a level of compression suitable for the bandwidth.
 - 25 6. A computer readable medium storing instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method of dynamically selecting a level of compression to be applied to data to be transmitted, the

method comprising:

- receiving a data request at a server configured to serve data;
- identifying a bandwidth associated with a communication link coupling the server to a requestor that originate the data request;
- 5 determining an amount of data requested in the data request;
- determining how busy the server is;
- dynamically selecting a level of compression based at least on the bandwidth; and
- compressing the requested data using the selected level of compression.

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- 7. A computer-implemented method of dynamically selecting a level of compression to apply to a set of data, the method comprising:
 - receiving from a client a request for a set of data;
 - determining a bandwidth available on a communication link used by the 15 client;
 - based on the determined bandwidth, dynamically selecting a level of compression to apply to the set of data; and
 - compressing the data using the selected level of compression prior to transmitting the set of data toward the client.

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- 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the dynamically selected level of compression is inversely proportional to the determined bandwidth.

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- 9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
 - determining whether the set of data is cacheable;
 - wherein a higher level of compression is dynamically selected if the set of data is cacheable than if the set of data is not cacheable.

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10. The method of claim 9, wherein said determining comprises:
transferring to the client a data object having a known size; and
measuring the amount of time required for the transfer.

5 11. The method of claim 9, wherein said determining comprises:
using an identity of the client, retrieving from a data collection a
bandwidth associated with the identity.

12. A computer readable medium storing instructions that, when
10 executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method of dynamically
selecting a level of compression to apply to a set of data, the method comprising:
receiving from a client a request for a set of data;
determining a bandwidth available on a communication link used by the
client;
15 based on the determined bandwidth, dynamically selecting a level of
compression to apply to the set of data; and
compressing the data using the selected level of compression prior to
transmitting the set of data toward the client.

20 13. An apparatus for dynamically selecting a level of compression to
be applied to data to be transmitted from the apparatus, comprising:
a compression module configured to compress, with a specified level of
compression, a set of data to be transmitted to a data requestor; and
a dynamic compression selection module configured to dynamically select
25 said level of compression based on a bandwidth associated with a communication
link employed by the data requestor.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:

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a bandwidth determination module configured to determine the bandwidth of a communication link used by the data requestor.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said bandwidth determination
5 module is configured to calculate the bandwidth by transferring a known quantity
of data between the data requestor and the apparatus.

16. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said bandwidth determination
module is configured to retrieve the bandwidth from a database configured to
10 identify bandwidths associated with data requestors' communication links.

17. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the apparatus is configured to
determine a size of the requested set of data.

15 18. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the apparatus is configured to
determine whether the requested set of data is cacheable.